

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended) A method for fabricating an integrated circuit, comprising the steps of:

forming a dielectric layer;  
forming openings in the dielectric layer;  
filling said openings with a barrier, a copper seed, and an electroplated copper film;  
chemically-mechanically polishing said copper film; and  
after chemically-mechanically polishing said copper film, forming a silicon nitride layer by:

transferring the semiconductor body to a chamber;  
gaseously doping the copper film with silicon without forming a copper silicide by flowing a gas chemistry consisting of silane over the copper film in the chamber with the RF power off prior to striking a plasma;  
striking said plasma in said chamber after flowing said silane for at least 0.5 seconds; and  
then flowing at least one nitrogen-containing source gas into said chamber to deposit a silicon nitride layer over said copper interconnect.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said doping step dopes only a top region of the copper film with silicon.

3. (currently amended) ~~A method for fabricating an integrated circuit, comprising the steps of:~~

~~forming a dielectric layer;~~  
~~forming openings in the dielectric layer;~~

~~filling said openings with a barrier, a copper seed, and an electroplated~~  
~~copper film;~~  
~~chemically-mechanically polishing said copper film; and~~  
~~after chemically-mechanically polishing said copper film, gaseously~~  
~~doping the copper film with silicon without forming a copper silicide by flowing a~~  
~~gas chemistry consisting essentially of silane over the copper film with an RF power off;~~  
The method of claim 1, wherein said doping step dopes a surface of said copper film  
that leads to a final bulk silicon concentration in the range of 0.03at. % to 0.5 at. %.

4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said dielectric layer comprises an interlevel dielectric and an intrametal dielectric.

5. (original) The method of claim 4, wherein said openings comprise vias in the interlevel dielectric and trenches in the intrametal dielectric.

6. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said doping step comprises flowing silane over the copper film for a duration in the range of 0.5 to 5 seconds at 325°C-425°C.

7. (currently amended) A method of fabricating an integrated circuit, comprising the steps of:

providing a semiconductor body having a trench formed in a dielectric layer at a surface thereof;

forming a copper film over the semiconductor body including with said trench,

chemically-mechanically polishing the copper film to form a copper interconnect;

after said chemical-mechanical polish step, doping said copper interconnect with silicon without forming a silicide by flowing silane over a surface of the copper interconnect with an RF power off prior to striking a plasma;

wherein said doping step comprises part of a silicon nitride deposition process;

and wherein said silicon nitride deposition process comprises the steps of:

transferring the semiconductor body to a chamber;  
performing said doping step by flowing silane in said chamber for a given  
time prior striking said plasma in said chamber;  
striking said plasma in said chamber after flowing said silane for at least  
0.5 seconds; and  
then flowing at least one nitrogen-containing source gas into said chamber  
to deposit a silicon nitride layer over said copper interconnect.

8. (cancelled).

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said silane is flowed over the surface of the copper interconnect for a duration of approximately 3 seconds.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said silane is flowed over the surface of the copper interconnect for a duration in the range of 0.05 to 5 seconds at 325° C to 425° C.

11-12. (cancelled)